

# Socialist Worker

(01) 8722682 <http://www.swp.ie> [swp@clubi.ie](mailto:swp@clubi.ie)

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY €1.00 / £0.70p

**END THE  
OCCUPATIONS  
OF IRAQ & PALESTINE**  
**US Military Out of Shannon**  
**Global Day of Action**  
**NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION**  
**Saturday September 27th**  
**2pm Parnell Square Dublin**  
**Called by the Irish Anti War Movement**



# Beaten, tortured, drugged...

# US plans death camp

**THE US is building a death camp to execute prisoners in Guantanamo Bay.**

Major General Geoffrey Miller, who is in charge of the 680 suspects from 43 countries, has admitted the newly constructed Camp Delta will have a death row and execution chamber.

American law professor, Jonathan Turley, who has led civil rights protests, says 'The camp was created to execute people. The administration has

no interest in long-term prison sentences for people it regards as hard-core terrorists'.

## Scandal

The US preaches the doctrine of 'human rights' around the world and uses it as a pretext to intervene militarily.

But what is happening at Guantanamo Bay is a global human rights scandal.

The detainees have been held for more than 18 months without any contact with their lawyers and families. They are

labelled 'unlawful combatants' so that the US can escape any obligation under the Geneva conventions.

They include a number of teenagers who are younger than 16 years of age.

The detainees are kept in steel cages, which are 8ft by 6ft 8in. The cages were originally open to the millions of mosquitoes and to the blaring heat.

Mohammed Sanghir is one of the few people to have been released from Guantanamo Bay.

He is a Pakistani Muslim missionary who was released after a year's detention—with-out as much as an apology.

'We were like animals. If we were men, why put us in a cage?'

In this secretive setting, the US uses drugs and torture to extract evidence.

Shah Mohammad, another Pakistani man who was released in May, told the BBC that he was given injections to make him talk while in custody,

'They used to tell me I was

mad. I was given injections at least four or five times as well as different tablets. I don't know what they were meant for.'

## Admit

US authorities unofficially admit to using 'torture lite'—sleep deprivation and constant exposure to bright light

The prisoners at Guantanamo Bay are now to face military tribunals.

However, the standards of justice are scarcely credible:

they can only be represented by US lawyers; all conversations will be monitored; prisoners will be charged with more than a dozen crimes and every offence is punishable by death.

New York lawyer, Michael Ratner, who is President of the Centre for Constitutional Rights says it is 'a one way ticket to conviction'.

Yet, despite claiming to support 'human rights' neither Bertie Ahern nor Tony Blair has condemned the scandal of Guantanamo Bay.

## Reuters: News from toffs

Reuters, the global news wire group, is facing a class action over racial discrimination. One black employee was repeatedly referred to as 'my nigger'.

Another was sent a scantily clad picture of Miss South Africa with an ape's head placed on top of a woman's torso.

The class action says Reuters has a 'white public school attitude'. Yet the company claims to present 'objective' news reports from around the world.

## ILDA are wrong

Socialist Worker has consistently supported the right to train drivers who formed ILDA to have union representation.

However, the leaders of ILDA are now playing into the hands of their enemies by claiming that the recent protest by CIE workers was not properly organised under the terms of the Industrial Relations Act.

This notorious law is designed to curb union rights. Instead of trying to use it, the ILDA branch of the ATGWU should join with other trade unionists in resisting CIE's threat to dock wages for the No Fares day.

## Sharks gather

Former Taoiseach Albert Reynolds is planning to set up a power company in Iraq.

'I have done a lot of business with Iraq in the past prior to the Gulf war' he said.

He sure has. Reynolds was the Minister in the Fianna Fail government who gave export credit cover to Larry Goodman in the midst of Saddam Hussein's war with Iran.

Reynold's decision came just a month after the US opened \$200 million of credits for Iraq as they did a 'tilt' in their foreign policy.

Co-incidentally, Reynolds' own company, C and D pet food was hoping for venture capital from Goodman International at the time. This, of course had nothing to do with his decision to open export credit insurance cover for Iraq.

## They have not gone away

Fianna Fail ran a hospitality tent at the Galway races for 350 euros a head. And lo and behind all the old mates were there.

The event was organised by Des Richardson, who has been the subject of inquiries at the Planning Tribunal after payments were revealed to a company he controlled with Frank Dunlop.

Catering was provided by Lydon Hopuse Catering to which Dunlop paid £10,000 in a 'pick-me up' VAT scam.

And in attendance were the Tribunal stars Michael Bailey of Bovale Developments, Oliver Barry, and Xavier McAuliffe.

# WATER: WE WON'T PAY

ANTI WATER tax, campaigners in Belfast are planning a series of public meetings over the coming months in the run up to the release of the government's report into the public consultation exercise.

The plans will

mean that households will have to pay up to £600 per year for their water.

This is despite the fact that in Northern Ireland the cost of water is already included in the rates bill.

The South & East Belfast Anti Water Charges Campaign will hold a

meeting on Thursday August 28th at 7pm in the Ballynafeigh Community Association premises on Belfast's Ormeau Road.

Secretary of the campaign, Ryan McKinney, told Socialist Worker, "We can best defeat the government's plans if we are

organised everywhere, on every street.

"The Trade Unions have already kicked off the campaign by petitioning and lobbying.

However like the Poll Tax we will need to build a mass opposition."

# Out and Proud

THE Institute for Conflict Research reported that 80 percent of gay people in Northern Ireland had been harassed because of their sexuality.

Many also stated that they had been physically attacked. A young gay man in South Belfast has also been murdered.

Attacks on gays come from conservatives on both sides of the religious divide.

The Pope has just launched an openly homophobic campaign to stop



■ Ratzinger: homophobic and Hitler Youth

any recognition of gay marriages.

The main document was written by Cardinal Ratzinger, a former member of

the Hitler Youth.

Similar attacks on gays have also been made by Ian Paisley's DUP.

However, gay people are not putting up with this nonsense.

Over 500 people from across the gay community marched in this year's annual pride march in Belfast.

It was supported by different organisations, including UNISON, Amnesty and the Socialist Workers' Party amongst others.

Along the route of the march, there was open support with Saturday shoppers joining on.

As a sign of the changing times, the march was more youthful than in previous years and a lot more political.

## Nazis try to organise in the North

A GROUP of neo-Nazis is trying to organise in five towns in Northern Ireland—including Craigavon where there has been a spate of racist attacks on Muslim families.

And they are making friends amongst local loyalists.

The White Nationalist Party is a hard-core splinter group of former BNP members.

The Nazis thrive on the racist climate the town's councillors have created. DUP members urged people to oppose a mosque being built in the area. They argued, "Muslim prayers are noisy".

The WNP put up posters saying "No Mosques in Portadown. This is Britain, not Bangladesh." Three families have now left Craigavon for Manchester.

Like Combat 18, who have links to the LVF, the Nazis are fostering links with an outfit called the Giants Causeway Protestant Boys and other groups linked to the UDA.

In Ballymena, the WNP has put up flags outside the town's Housing Executive and Social Security Agency offices.

It is no coincidence that the homes of Philipino nurses have been attacked there.

# Colombia 3 show trial ends

THE TRIAL of Niall Connolly, James Monaghan and Martin McAuley has ended after they have been imprisoned for nearly two years.

The whole procedure was a farce from the start.

The men were arrested by the notorious 13th regiment, which has a record of collaborating with right wing paramilitaries.

They were brought to a military detention centre but no test was done on their clothes and no swabs were taken from them.

The sole evidence against them was one test by a US 'expert' on their bags.

### Evidence

Over 100 tests by Colombian military police for explosives yielded negative results.

The US expert who said they tested positive for explosives never gave evidence.

Claims that the three were sighted meeting FARC guerrillas were contradicted by evidence by a senior Irish diplomat, Sile Maguire.

She testified that Niall Connolly had met her on the same date in Cuba.

Despite all this, the president



■ The Colombia 3: Niall Connolly, James Monaghan and Martin McAuley

of Colombia Alvaro Uribe claimed he had no doubt about the men's guilt.

He was playing a political game to try to extract more

money from the US under Plan Colombia.

This gives military aid in return for fighting 'terrorism'. Throughout the trial the Irish

media often branded the men as guilty but as the evidence of the prosecution effectively collapsed, the media itself should now be put in the dock.

# This is not child abuse?

IN 1960, infants who were residents at children's homes were given vaccination trials without full or proper consent from parents or guardians.

Professor Patrick Meenan was the chair of microbiology in UCD at the time and as responsible for importing the vaccines.

Past residents of the homes campaigned to have the issue investigated and Professor Meenan was asked to give evidence before the Laffoy Commission.

However, the Supreme Court has just ruled that the requirement on him to attend and give evidence was excessive in light of his age and infirmity.

Justice Adrian Hardi-

man, a former Progressive Democrat activist, added, 'The question of the propriety of the 1960 vac-

## Abuse and neglect in old people homes

TWENTY FIVE thousand older people are accommodated in nursing homes.

However, there is no independent inspection at the state's 500 public nursing homes and not enough staff to inspect all private

homes.

A document discovered under the Freedom of Information Act shows that some homes fail to wash patients regularly, heat homes adequately or provide hygienic food. However, there is no censure.

## RIP-OFF IRELAND

VHI premiums are set to rise by 8 percent this year—even though the profits of the state owned company grew by 130 percent.

The reason: The company is about to be privatised so multi-national investors need some 'attraction'.

# It's still one law for the rich

A SPATE of scandals at the end of July showed just how class ridden and this country still is.

Accountants Noel Fox and Michael Irwin helped Ben Dunne to conceal the payments he was making to Charlie Haughey and Michael Lowry.

The Blayney Inquiry set up by the accountancy profession took six years and spent 3.2 million euro to unearth all this.

But then Fox was just censured while Irwin was reprimanded.

If a car mechanic had tampered with an engine before the re-sale of the car, they would be before the courts and either imprisoned or fined.

But not the top of the accountancy profession.



■ Haughey



## Official racism is on the rise.

The Fianna Fail-Progressive Democrat government are deeply unpopular.

They won an election by pretending that the Celtic Tiger boom would continue. But the economy is now at rock bottom and virtually everyone knows that the super-rich grabbed nearly all the benefits of the boom.

When right wing politicians are in a corner, they often try to play the race card. They try to find scapegoats to take attention off themselves.

Asylum seekers refugees are targeted to pretend that the politicians are looking 'after their own'.

In this special editorial, *Socialist Worker* provides detailed case studies of how racism is being stoked up in Irish society.

## editorial



# Let my parents stay!

**ELEVEN thousand asylum seekers face immediate deportation under new rules announced by Justice Minister McDowell.**

On 17 July McDowell announced that those seeking to stay on the basis that they had Irish born children were to be deported.

His departmental officials immediately issued the first 400 notices of effective deportation.

### Humanitarian

They have been told they have just 15 working days to make written representations for temporary leave to remain on humanitarian

grounds

There is no legal aid for those seeking legal representation which can cost €2,000-€4,000.

This follows a disgraceful Supreme Court decision of February removing the right of parents to remain with Irish born children.

While Irish citizens cannot be legally deported, they will

be effectively obliged to leave the country with their parents.

McDowell callously proclaimed he would not be 'blackmailed' by parents threatening to leave their children behind, and, if necessary, that the courts will compel them to take their citizen children with them.

# North-South co-operation against asylum seekers

**THE UK and Irish authorities are using the border as a cynical method of reducing the number of asylum seekers in both states, with devastating effects.**

In recent weeks there have been a number of joint operations where people who have made claims for asylum in the South having travelled to the North to visit relatives, go shopping, or get cheaper flights to England to get terminations. They have been detained by the UK authorities and ended up in Maghaberry Prison.

Instead of returning them to the Republic, which they would be entitled to do under the Dublin Convention, the UK authorities have instead been immediately booking flights to return them to their country of origin.

While in the prison they are held under the same conditions as other prisoners, often being locked up for 19 hours a day. In recent weeks

they have included two women with Irish born babies who were also locked up for 19 hours a day.

Those detained are often unable to speak English and

have nobody to translate for them what is happening. They believe that they are just being held until the Irish authorities make arrangements to have them returned.

The first they know of their true situation is when the "heavy squad" arrive from England to put them on flights to places like Nigeria or Beijing.

In one case in recent weeks this happened a woman from Nigeria and her Irish born baby who after five days in the prison were being sent to Nigeria at an hour's notice. The attitude of the Irish authorities when told of the situation was that it was a matter for the UK authorities to decide.

Of course, the question is would they have intervened if a white Irish child of Irish parents was being sent to a country with a devastating record of human rights abuses? The reality is that, like most countries in Europe, racism underpins all areas of policy on immigration.

While the Irish Constitution recognises the rights of those born in Ireland to citizenship this clearly does not mean that they are entitled to the same rights as everyone else.

■ **BARBARA MULDOON**, Immigration Practitioner for a Human Rights Law Firm

## Tralee activists fight deportation

**ACTIVISTS in Tralee have got together to fight the deportation of South Africa Nteta Appiakorang.**

Nteta fled South Africa with her two daughters after a series of tragic and harrowing experiences.

She left South Africa because she feared for her children's and her own lives after her husband and son were murdered after they left a religious sect, the Inkatha.

For the last two and half years Nteta and her daughters have been living in Ballymullen barracks in Tralee.

But recently her hopes for a new life with safety for herself and her children were dashed when she was informed that she and her family are to be deported.

Activists from a number of organisations including the Tralee Anti War Movement immediately got together and started campaigning to get the Minister for Justice Michael McDowell to over turn the deportation order.

They collected signatures on petitions and wrote letters to all the national papers and every T.D demanding that Nteta be left stay

They also pleaded her case on the radio.

Nteta case was reviewed again but her deportation looks imminent.

She has in her short time in the area become a very productive member of the community involved with many organisations and she works voluntarily in a local charity shop.

One local activist told *Socialist Worker*, "If Nteta is allowed to be deported thousands will follow in this government's ethnic cleansing programme."

■ **DANIEL CALLANAN**

## We love Ireland—but not the poverty trap

**HALF OF the Filipino nurses who work in Irish hospitals will leave here by 2005.**

This is the prediction of John Ferry, the Filipino honorary consul to Ireland.

The reason is mistreatment.

'There is no future for Filipino nurses here.

'We're trying to get Filipinos to see Ireland as a poverty trap, just a training ground to get experience in England or Australia'.

One of the main reasons for leaving is their spouses are unable to get work permits. In England there is no problem with work permits for spouses.

But here highly qualified family members are denied the right to work.

On top of that, many nurses are only given contracts for three months.

There is no security because the health boards are cutting costs.

The loss of 2,000 nurses would deal a real



comment

# Debates on the road to Paris

Alex Callinicos on the emergence of a Europe-wide left

FOR AS long as I can remember, people have been saying that the left needs to organise at a European level to match the development of the European Union. For years, this was just talk. Now, in an absent-minded sort of way, it's happening.

The main vehicle through which a European left is emerging is the European Social Forum (ESF).

The first of these continent-wide gatherings of the anti-capitalist movement took place in Florence late last year.

The next will be in Paris on 12-16 November. The ultimate decision-making body for the ESF is a European assembly open to all activists who choose to come along.

This meets about every two months in a different European city. The latest took place in Genoa recently. This method of decision-making has its disadvantages.

The most obvious is that it favours those organisations that have the resources to send representatives to these meetings.

One of the great strengths of the ESF process, however, is that it brings together several hundred activists from all over Europe in regular discussions. Dozens must have taken part in all the meetings since the first one nearly 18 months ago.

## Activists

This means that activists from many different countries and backgrounds are developing a habit of working and discussing together. In the process, we are getting to know one another.

Political positions are being staked out and argued through. Usually ATTAC France, which campaigns for the regulation of financial markets, is on the right of the debates.

Activists from Italy, Britain and Greece are typically found further to the left.

Inevitably, the assemblies vary in quality. The best so far took place in Barcelona last October.

It was here that the argument was made and won for the ESF in Florence to focus on the then imminent war on Iraq and to launch a call for an international day of protest on 15 February. So the ESF has helped to make history.

Unfortunately the assembly in Genoa didn't match these high standards. It was a diffuse and frustrating meeting.

The reasons for this are, in the main, political. The Anglo-American conquest of Iraq disoriented many activists. They believed in effect that Bush and Blair had won.

So the different anti-war movements have agreed in principle that September will be a month of action against the occupation of Iraq.

But nothing like the 27 September Stop the War Coalition demonstration in London seems to be planned in important European countries such as Italy and Spain.

The leadership of ATTAC France has consistently been sceptical about the importance and significance of the anti-war movement.

## Confusion

Pierre Khalfa, a prominent member deeply involved in the ESF process, argued recently that Bush's war drive is an ideological project that has nothing intrinsically to do with either neo-liberalism or globalisation.

The political confusion has been exacerbated by a lack of drive from the French organising committee of the next ESF.

It would be a mistake, however, to paint too bleak a picture. The right wing of ATTAC do not represent the broader movement.

There was an exhibition in Genoa to mark the second anniversary of the protests at the Group of Eight summit. It demonstrated that, certainly in Italy, there is a very clear understanding of the organic connection between war and neo-liberalism.

The assembly responded very well to those speakers seeking to offer a way forward to the movement.

These speakers stressed the importance of resisting the imperialist war and what the French Marxist philosopher Daniel Bensad calls the social war—the offensive that is being mounted against the welfare state all over Europe.

The struggles to defend pensions in countries like France and Austria in recent months were in many people's minds.

Piero Bernocchi of the radical Italian union Cobas struck a chord when he talked about organising "a social 15 February".

Despite the weaknesses of the French organising committee, Paris this autumn is likely to be an ideal site for the ESF.

# FIGHT PAY FREEZES Support the Shorts workers

**SEVEN** hundred angry Shorts workers turned up to a meeting in the Ulster Hall to reject the pay deal from Bombardier, the Canadian multinational, despite the threats of management to sack over one thousand workers if the deal is not accepted.

A few months ago, Bombardier demanded that workers accept a four-year pay deal, which included a one-year wage freeze and an increase of 2 per cent over the following three years.

Bombardier argued that the pay freeze was essential to the continued operation of the company given the downturn in the Aerospace industry.

## Pressure

Despite tremendous pressure, over 60 per cent of the workforce declined the offer.

The response by management was to change the shift patterns reducing staffing levels on night-shift, cancel projected capital investment, and cancel any further apprentice intakes.

After a further rejection of the deal, they have intensified the threats that the future of the company is at stake.

Management has also announced the acceleration of the redundancy programme announced in March.

They intend to sack 3,000 workers throughout their operations worldwide.

This comes on top of the 3,800 redundancies announced last September.

Bombardier has a history of doing deals like this.



■ Five years ago: Gordon Brown promising Shorts workers a bright future

The company recently pushed through a deal in Wichita for a wage freeze in return for jobs and con-

tinued investment. Despite the deal there are still redundancies planned.

As one worker said in

Belfast, 'there are no guarantees that they won't let jobs go even if we accept the pay freeze'.

# The devastation of East Belfast

WORKERS in East Belfast have already seen what happens once privatisation and multinational capital gets a foothold.

Bombardier's actions are almost identical to those of Fred Olsen the Norwegian shipping tycoon, which lead to the devastation of the shipbuilders, Harland and Wolff, once a major employer in East Belfast.

Despite over a billion pounds being handed over to Olsen, thousands of workers were laid off, and the company now employs

only a few hundred workers. Olsen recently sold off land for housing development making substantial profits.

## Agreed

Workers agreed to the deal on the basis that the profits were used to reinvigorate the shipbuilding operations. Instead Olsen sacked the workforce.

Bombardier took over the Shorts plant with some fanfare and has been well rewarded with government funds to maintain its

investments in Shorts. They have made over £30 million a year in profits and have sold off parts of the operation for over £70 million.

As in Harland and Wolff, there has been little of the so-called 'peace dividend' for the workers.

Like Fred Olsen while Bombardiers have raked in the cash, they also halved the workforce.

Despite the company's recent profit slide they still managed a \$56 million profit for the first quarter of this year.

# We need decent union reps

THE trade union representatives have played a cowardly role in this dispute.

Both Kevin McAdam of Amicus and Andy McGivern of the GMB have argued to accept the deal.

Kevin McAdam of the Amicus trade union spoke of his 'shock and concern' at the result and urged the workers to reconsider.

Andy McGivern of the GMB reproached the workers saying, 'There are a number of people realising that perhaps the company wasn't bluffing, and the senior trade unions were telling them the truth.'

## Identical

The leaflets given out before the vote were almost identical to those of management.

Shorts have a history of removing trade union negotiators who genuinely stand up for their members.

A popular official Joe Bowers, who was a member of the Communist Party, was removed by his own union MSF.

He had led opposition to the transfer of jobs and showed how the company were making illegal deductions from workers pay packets.

It was later revealed that his own union leaders had conspired with the Shorts management to get rid of him.

This legacy of poor representation needs to be overcome by Shorts workers.

They need to take their unions back for the rank and file.

# The Unionist politicians who back management

**THE** Unionist Party claims to represent all classes in Ulster.

However, the crisis at Shorts shows they are not on the workers' side.

Reg Empey has demanded that workers rescind their decision not to accept a pay freeze.

He says 'The initiative rests with the Minister and the unions who must persuade staff to get back into negotiations'.



■ Reg Empey

Jim Rodgers told the workers that they

were 'left with no other choice but to look at this again and let the shop stewards go back to the negotiating table.'

Republicans have little to say to the Shorts workers because their struggle does not fit with their agenda.

The whole crisis shows why a different type of politics is needed—socialist politics that put class interests before the



■ Jim Rodgers

sectarian communal games that the bigger parties play.



# Iraqis fight back

ATTACKS on US troops in Iraq are growing. In July alone 43 members of the US forces in Iraq were killed. Many more were injured. On average there are twelve attacks each day on occupying troops.

A soldier with the US field Artillery unit based in Baghdad recently told the *Washington Post*, 'Two or three weeks ago, we used to be hit at night. Now we get hit during the day'.

The US central command has been forced to admit that it is now embroiled in a guerrilla war. Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz conceded 'some of our assumptions were wrong'.

Protests have been mounted by families of US troops calling for them to be brought home. According to the *New York Times*, frustration became so bad at Fort Stewart in Georgia when a colonial met 800 spouses of soldiers that he had to be escorted out.

A recent *Washington Post*ABC opinion polls shows that 40 percent of the population now believe that the war against Iraq was wrong—up from 27 percent. 52 percent of Americans think that the casualties in Iraq are unacceptable.

In Britain confidence in Tony Blair has plummeted to new lows after the David Kelly affair.

The families of four soldiers who were killed in Iraq appeared on Channel 4 news. They called for an inquiry into the deaths of their relatives which they blamed on inadequate equipment and poor preparation.

In Poland, one of the few countries that has agreed to send troops to Iraq to aid the US-British occupation, public support for deployment has fallen from 50 percent in June to 3 percent.

The coalition and the proponents of war are under severe pressure



■ Iraqis confront occupying troops

# The resistance is diverse

The US hoped that the deaths of Uday and Qusay Hussein would prove a turning point. Instead it is becoming clearer that the resistance to the occupation is not being led by the old regime.

In Vietnam when the population resisted they were branded 'communists'. In Iraq they are 'Ba'athists', 'Saddam loyalists' or 'terrorists/Al Qaeda'.

The resistance, however, is spread across all sectors of Iraqi society.

Radical Shi'ite clerics, former soldiers, Shi'ite slum dwellers, Sunni Muslims and the citizens of towns and cities all over Iraq are opposing the occupation.

Few cities welcomed the fall of Saddam Hussein more enthusiastically than Najaf.

The local clerical dynasty, the al-Sadr's, had seen two of their ayatollahs murdered by Saddam.

Yet 10,000 young men have just come forward to join an 'Islamic army' there, after a call from Muqrada al Sadr. He has denounced the US appointed governing council and has been organising mass demonstrations of the kind which toppled the Shah of Iran in 1979.

While Paul Bremer, the US civil ruler of Iraq, resides in Saddam's Jumhuriya Palace and travels in a heavily-guarded limousine, the people of Baghdad are deprived of

regular supplies of running water and electricity.

The Food and Agricultural Organisation has warned that Iraq's agriculture is on the brink of collapse.

Isam al-Khafaji, who returned to Iraq to take up a position on the US appointed Iraqi Reconstruction and Development Council, resigned last month.

He 'feared my role within the council was sliding from what I had originally envisioned—working with the allies in a democratic fashion—to collaborating with occupying force ... there seemed to be no interest on the part of the coalition in involving Iraqis as advisers on the future of their nation'.

★ According to Iraq Body Count, a group of American and British academics and researchers monitoring the Iraqi death toll, up to 10,000 civilians and 20,000 soldiers have been killed so far in the war on Iraq.

Countless more Iraqis have been 'disappeared' off the streets. Many end up in detention camps like Camp Cropper in Baghdad where 2,000 people are detained in woeful conditions.

The Americans are transferring some detainees to Guantanamo Bay. Amnesty International has been refused access to the camp.

# And now it is spreading across the Middle East

*A Second Cairo Conference against US aggression will take place on October 25th and 26th. It will bring together activists from the Middle East and the rest of the world to discuss how to oppose the US occupation. Here activist RAIDA HATOUM of the Lebanese paper Al-Yasari (the Leftist) explains the impact of the war on Iraq on the Middle East*

NOBODY SHOULD expect the resistance to the US occupation of Iraq to go away after the killing of Saddam's sons last week.

The actions against the occupying troops have accelerated and US troops are suffering increasing casualties.

The occupation forces are not considered any different from the old regime.

A few days after the fall of Baghdad the resistance was emerging.

The Iraqis know that the US occupation is another tyranny imposed on them, and they will never stop fighting until they achieve their independence.

The general understanding on the Arab street is that the US-led democracy is no different from the Israeli democracy—led by occupation, tanks, bombs, targeted kills.

Popular responses to the war among ordinary people included volunteering to fight the US in Iraq. There were also demonstrations against the war.

The demonstrators were divided into two camps.

The first opposed the US war but supported the Arab regimes.

The second, which connected with the feeling of the Arab street, opposed the US war and the state oppression by the Arab and Middle Eastern ruling class.

## Emerging

The new emerging left in the Middle East led the second camp.

It has initiated a new force proclaiming change and demanding it on all levels.

15 February 2003 was a challenge. The movement opposed to the war on Iraq organised massive demonstrations across the world.

Activists understood that the Arab regimes are responsible for helping the US forces.

They are also responsible for crushing down the intifada and their own people.

In Egypt demonstrators protested against the war, but at the same time attacked the regime.

In Jordan, a campaign was carried out with the title 'No to US aggression, and no to the regime's oppression'.

In Lebanon the 'No War-No Dictatorships campaign' made it clear that to stop the war we should bring down our regimes. This campaign carried out a successful act throughout three months.

We created a network of leftist groups from different tendencies, student groups within the universities, and a coalition of non-governmental organisations.

In Bahrain, women's groups and small underground groups called for stopping the regime's support for the war, stopping the regime's oppression and stopping the war on Iraq.

## Regimes

In Tunisia the unions organised a campaign, independent from the state-led campaign, calling for stopping the war on Iraq, stopping the Arab regime support of US, and declaring these regimes as dictatorships.

The regimes responded with more oppression, arresting activists and leading media attacks on the activists. Torture is used widely.

April 2002 witnessed a surprising change in the Arab street. Huge protests swept the Middle East in response to the Israeli siege of Jenin.

Small groups had organised grassroots campaigns supporting the second intifada, or uprising of the Palestinian people, which began in September 2000.

The second intifada lit the spirit of resistance inside the

Arab world. These small groups were relating to the real needs and demands of the people.

The new left is growing gradually throughout the region.

But it faces a lot of challenges. It is trying to connect more to the international movement. It is trying to find answers to the local issues.

The new leftist groups are trying to hold a movement together that can hold political and ideological differences (among the left) but at the same time have unity in action.

The last four months have proven that it is possible. It is now a serious movement.

The anti-war protests around the world had a positive impact on pushing out these groups to take part in more activism. Most of these groups were much more confident of their actions, as they knew they were part of the international movement.

It is clear that there are now two superpowers—the new world order led by the US and the anti-war global movement. People in the region no longer feel that we are alone. We will no longer face imperialism alone—we have the millions with us.



# WTO Summit cancelled

by AOIFE BRESLIN

The World Economic Forum's European Regional Summit on Global Competitiveness has been postponed. The Summit, which was due to take place in Dublin Castle on 20 October, would have brought European Heads of State together with the Continent's biggest and most rapacious multinationals in a covert discussion on how best to impose privatisation across the board in Europe.

According to the WEF, the Summit was rescheduled because their annual report on global competitiveness wasn't quite ready. However, the real story is that the event was cancelled due to mounting opposition amongst the Irish public to the government's agenda of privatisation, deregulation and greed.

In the week leading up to the announcement, both the *Sunday Times* and *Evening Herald* ran scare stories about how hundreds of anti-capitalists were already organising to shut down the WEF.

The WEF's announcement then came on 18 July, the same day as thousands of transport workers across the country refused to take fares from the travelling public in protest at the government's privatisation plans.

The WEF meeting in Dublin was also supposed to be a regional meeting where they discussed 'competitiveness' in the EU. The report they were examining was known as the Lisbon Review and was already up on their website!

Owen McCormack of the Busworkers' Action Group said 'I've never heard of a major international summit being cancelled at the last minute just because the summit organisers weren't ready. It's obvious that the government didn't have the bottle to go through with the summit.'

'There is huge support amongst the public for the anti-privatisation campaign and the government recognised that the WEF summit would have provided the ideal focus for disparate groups to join together and protest'.

Joe Carolan of Globalise Resistance added 'The World Economic Forum has been driven out of Dublin by mounting public pressure. Thousands of anti-capitalists had planned to stage blockades and a massive march against the organisation which has been dubbed the nearest thing that globalisation has to a World Headquarters.'

'This announcement is a major victory for Ireland's anti-capitalist movement. The unelected WEF is running for cover to the hills of Davos and the Irish government have shown that they are frightened of the potential of our movement.'

'We now have to get hundreds of anti-capitalists, transport workers, trade unionists and anti-war activists to the European Social Forum in Paris where the people's movement will discuss how together we can shut down not just one WEF summit, but permanently shut down capitalism'.

## Diary of Anti Capitalist Events

19 August: **National Demonstrations by Bus & Rail workers against Privatisation.** Join the Anti-Privatisation Forum contingent if you are not a CIE worker.

10-15 September: **WTO Ministerial Conference—Cancún, Mexico** Globalise Resistance will be organising a protest rally at Central Bank on 13 September.

27 September: **Global Day of Action against the Occupations of Iraq & Palestine** National Demonstration organised by the Irish Anti-War Movement 2pm Parnell Square, Dublin—for info contact 087 7955013

4 October: **World Vegetarian Day** St Andrew's Resource Centre, Pearse St., Dublin 2 Day of talks, stalls & video shows on the politics of food & farming

19-20 October: **Irish Social Forum Cooperation Summit** The Irish Social Forum, which had been organising protests against the summit, is organising a Cooperation Summit and Carnival of Resistance for October 19-20.

25-26 October: **International Campaign against US Aggression, Cairo, Egypt** Second International Conference against the war on Iraq, in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance, and in solidarity with all those opposing the neo-liberal 'globalisation' policies that have done so much to create international instability and inequality

12-15 November: **Second European Social Forum, Paris, France** Stop war, Against corporate power, People not profit, No to privatisation, No racism—no Fortress Europe—a space for people from all over Europe to come together to discuss how to build another world, and to organise opposition to corporate globalisation and war.

Info on these & other events available from: [www.swp.ie](http://www.swp.ie); [www.irishantiwar.org](http://www.irishantiwar.org); [www.fse-esf.org](http://www.fse-esf.org); [www.freewebs.com/globalise](http://www.freewebs.com/globalise); [www.irishsocialforum.org](http://www.irishsocialforum.org); <http://espora.org/cancun03/index.pl?en> (WTO)

# SOUTH AFRICA:

In 1994, an event of world significance occurred—the apartheid regime in South Africa fell.

Nelson Mandela, a former prisoner in Robbins island, became President. For the first time black people won the right to vote, to live where they wanted, to sit on park benches which were not reserved for whites only.

The ANC government was enormously popular. It still is. However, in the past few years something decisive has changed.

**TWO YEARS** after liberation from apartheid, a little reported event took place. The ANC government announced its new economic framework known as Growth Employment and Re-Distribution, which promised to 'deliver a better life for all'.

In reality, the document was a commitment to neo-liberal economic policies. Controls on capital were removed to reassure multinationals. A limit was imposed on social spending, particularly in health.

One effect was that the government refused to supply free drugs to AIDS sufferers even though South Africa had the highest number of HIV/AIDS sufferers in the world. Then there was privatisation.

ESKOM, the electricity company, was established to provide power to the apartheid's state mining complex. It supplied cut-price electricity to white owned industries—while most blacks went without domestic electricity and cooked on paraffin, wood and coal. Electricity only reached the black townships in the eighties.

The ANC privatised this electricity company. Electricity bills soared and soon the average dweller in the Soweto township was paying 500 rand a month in winter—even though the average monthly income for half the households was only 1,500 rand.

The government then instituted a 'cost recovery' policy. People who could not pay their bills were cut off. Many responded by illegally re-connecting their cables. The companies replied by employing the Wozani Security firm to seize furniture, to evict people and even to sell off houses.

To the population of the Soweto they became known as the 'Red Ants' When they appeared, there were often mass meetings and demonstrations.

The same thing started to happen with water. This time the jargon word that was used was 'commercialisation'.

'The full cost recovery principle' is one of the big ideas of the World Bank. It meant that water charges rose dramatically.

Edward Cottle of the Johannesburg based Rural Development services network explains what happens.

'Since 1994 over 10 million South Africans have had their water cut and 2 million have been evicted from their homes'.

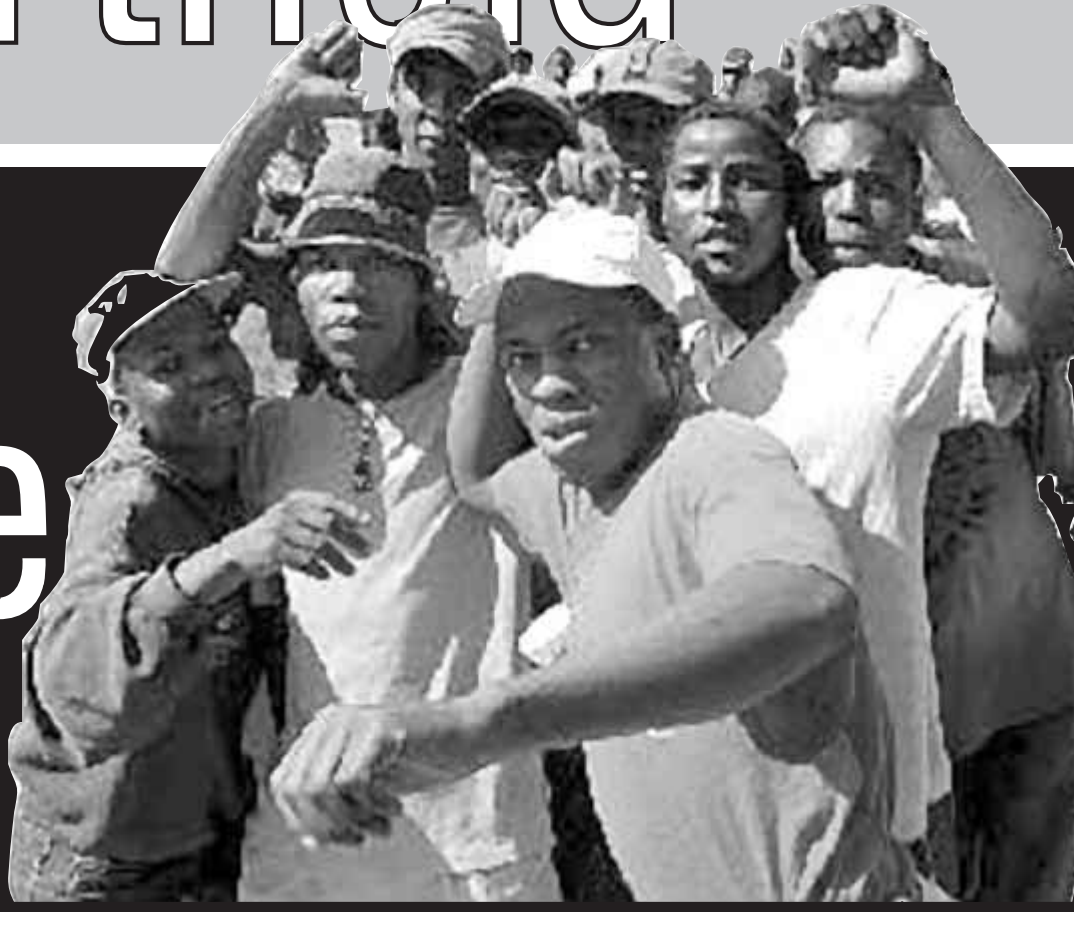
In KwaZulu Natal, when prepaid meters were installed there began an unprecedented outbreak of cholera as the poor could not afford the water. In the year 2,000 over 120,000 people became infected and 290 died.

Popular reaction forced the ANC government to back track and introduce a free water policy. But as Edward Cottle explains, 'The scheme's free allocation of 6,000 litres of water per household per month, does not even meet basic sanitation requirement, given that the average household had eight members'.

The black population suffered terribly under apartheid. But now privatisation and neo-liberal policies are undermining their victory over the hated old regime.

# How Privatisation ruined the victory over Apartheid

# But a new resistance grows...



■ Trevor Ngwane

**TREVOR Ngwane was an ANC councillor in Johannesburg when the dash to privatisation got underway.**

The council pushed through a local privatisation for the city, known as Igoli 2002. There was to be twenty thousand job losses and everything was to be put to tender.

'I called it Ecoli 2002, because water privatisation soon had sewerage leaking into the water table. Within three days, the ANC suspended me from all my position including

those in the council. It was then I became an independent'.

He went on to help form the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee to oppose the cut-offs.

'We have around 22 branches in Soweto, each with their own organising committee—we reckon around 7,000 members in all. One of the first things we did was to launch operation Khanyisa—khanyisa means light—where we re-connect people's electricity supply when it is cut off. Within six months, over 3,000 households had been put back on the grid'.

On June 30th 2000, the committee took a minibus to the house of the local mayor 'to cut off his supply, to remind him that he had to give us free water and electricity next day.'

Later when they returned to his house, his bodyguards opened fire. 'All hell broke loose. Oddly, there was a truck of municipal workers there, collecting garbage, and they let us help ourselves. The comrades poured rubbish in his swimming pool, cut his water and cut his light. In the end eighty-seven of us were arrested'.

It was only in March 2003 that they were all cleared by the courts.

The actions of Trevor Ngwane and his comrades were soon getting a wider resonance. On October 2002, the South African union, COSATU, called a general strike against privatisation.

The union leaders are still trying work with Mbeki's ANC government in a 'triple alliance'. However, already thousands of working class militants are looking for a left alternative to the ANC.



**SOUTH AFRICA'S Anti-Privatisation Forum has won fame throughout the world because of its struggles. Trevor Ngwane explains how it works.**

'The Anti-Privatisation Forum is a broader coalition of several dozen groups, with the SECC the most active.

'We set up the APF with a very simple term of reference; we are not here to debate privatisation, or find some third way to finesse it.

'Everyone here has decided that privatisation is bad, and wants to do something to fight it.'

'The main campaigns fought by the APF have been around water, electricity evictions. However, its roots are very much in the working class.

Trevor Ngwane explains.

'Some in the anti-globalisation movement say that the working classes are finished, that social movements or even civil society

movements consist of nothing more than an office and a big grant from somewhere or other.

'They can call a workshop, pay people to attend, give them a nice meal and then write up a good report. They build nothing on the ground.

'“Civil society” can be even more problematic, extending to the businesses

sectors and to NGOs tendering for contracts for privatised governments services.

'Of course, the working class faces greater obstacles, both political and organisation, with the neo-liberal turn of the ANC. However, it remains a key component of any alternative left strategy.'

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# Bush is no friend of Africa

**Bob Geldof and Bono have claimed that George Bush is helping Africa. Here SEGUN NELSON, an African socialist, living in Ireland replies.**

The current hype in the press is that President Bush is helping Africa more than any other world leader.

His June visit to the continent was supposed to show how much he cares.

However, the real reason is to re-colonise Africa so that it fits into the American imperialist agenda of world domination, following the occupation of Iraq.

The helplessness and hopelessness of the situation in Africa is being cynically exploited.

All the promised help to Africa, even for the treatment of AIDS, is tied to specific conditions.

These include acceptance of GM food in return for assistance in agriculture and acceptance of military bases for help in social and economic development.

It is a contradiction to imagine Bush, who represents the archangel of global imperialism would really help Africa.

Imperialism by its very nature is predatory and exploitative in both its immediate metropolis and its distant sphere of influence. It brings neither help nor comfort nor peace.

The resilience of Africans, who through their struggle are not ashamed to be an age-long patient people, is a call to arms to all true socialists.

They will continue willingly to sacrifice and strive, but they are unable to starve any longer, to support by their poverty the ignorance and evil of a callous system of imperialism.

The most important help that can be offered is awakening revolutionary consciousness.

## Struggle

During the struggle for Flag independence, any individual or group with socialist ideas were discouraged, harassed, arrested and sometimes murdered without trial.

This ensured the stillbirth of critical revolutionary consciousness and culture on most parts of the continent.

However, the reception Bush got during his last spot visit to Africa shows the vigilance and resentment the average African feels towards imperialism's archangel in the wake

of his wasteful war on Iraq.

From Mandela to the mothers in the village, from the workers and students, the message to Bush was that his regime has been exposed for what they really are—the enemies of humanity—whose sole aim is neither compassion nor mercy but, exploitation and oppression.

African is central to the struggle against oppression as it is there that capitalism manifests itself in its most barbaric and brutal form.

Justice, can only be achieved through a universal workers' socialist revolution.

The success of a socialist revolution in the West would signal the end of exploitation and oppression in Africa.

Similarly, its success in Africa would make revolution inevitable as capitalism devoid of its distant prey will cease to be imperial, a condition that it cannot exist without.

All of this confirms the universality of the struggle

It is thus necessary to see through the smoke screen of the neo-liberal hype of Bush helping Africa.

## Refuses

The US regime refuses to countenance the cancellation of Africa's debt.

This amounts to a staggering \$300 billion even though most of its people live on less than \$1 a day.

Each year, debt repayments amount to \$15 billion. The result is that 10 African governments spent more on debt repayments than on health care and primary education combined.

Bush's much trumpeted \$15 billion for fighting AIDS has also been exaggerated.

The money hasn't yet arrived and is only to be delivered over five years. Bush is the biggest supporter of the pharmaceutical industry, which is trying to block the use of generic drugs in Africa.

An Indian company is able to supply anti-retroviral drugs for \$350, which cost over \$10,000 dollars from US drug companies. However, Bush is using the WTO to stop the spread of these cheaper drugs.

All of this is the legacy of centuries of continuing imperialism in Africa. Imperialism conquered the continent, oppressed and exploited the people shamelessly, reducing them to servitude, degrading the lives of millions of human beings and depraving a whole continent of happiness.

So, with friends like Bush helping, Africa needs no enemy.

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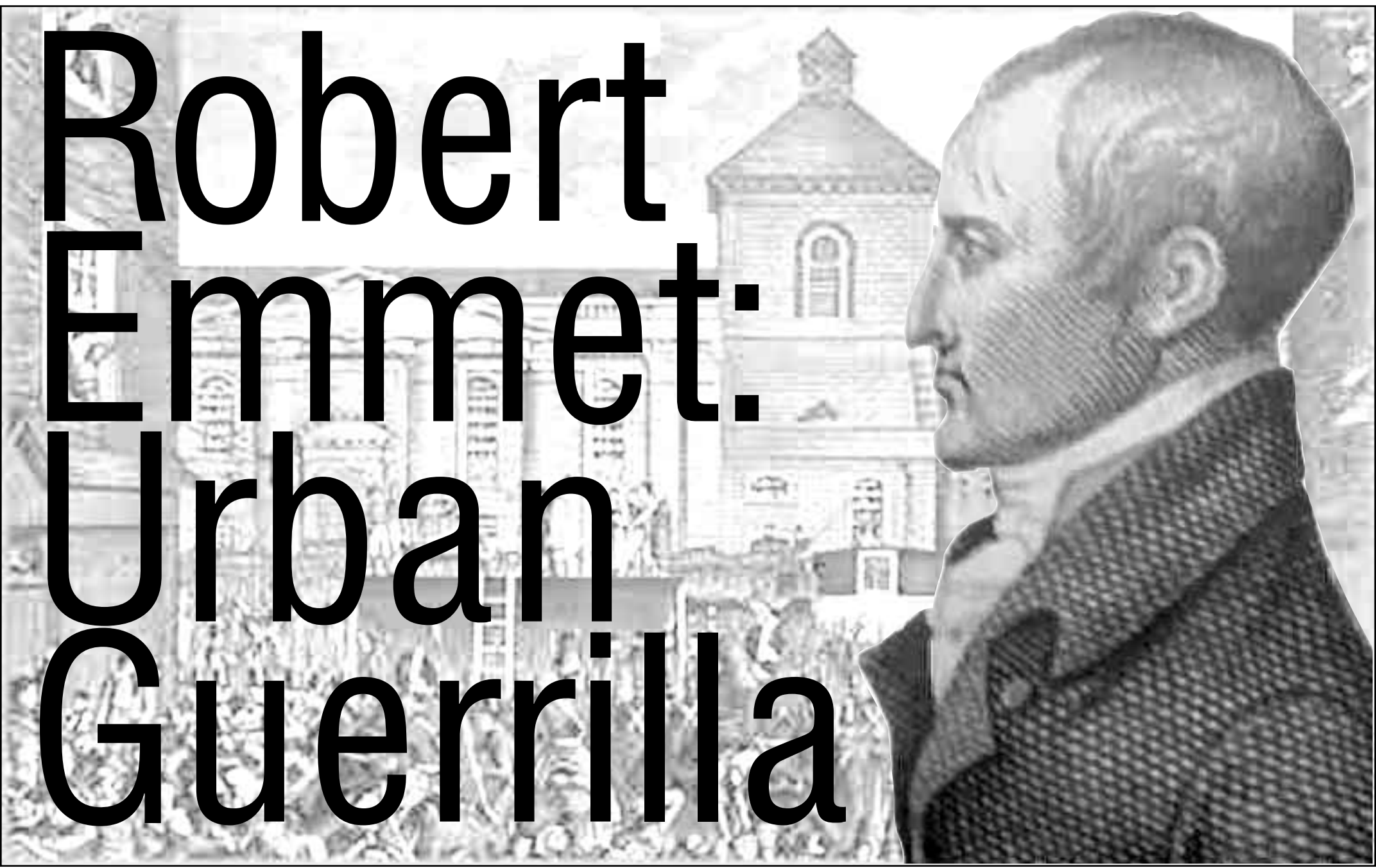
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# Robert Emmet: Urban Guerrilla

*'I wish that my memory and name may animate those who survive me, while I look down with complacency on the destruction of that perfidious government which reigns amidst the cries of the orphans and the widows it has made'*

When the notorious hanging judge, Lord Norbury, pronounced the death sentence on Robert Emmet on 19 September 1803, he came to the standard formula, 'what have you to say why judgement and death should not be awarded against you?'

He was taken aback by one of the most powerful speeches of a condemned person—a speech that succeeded in setting on record the views of Robert Emmet to the public of his day and inspiring revolutionaries of the future.

On 23 July a rising had taken place in Dublin.

It was the last effort to wrest the government of Ireland out of the hands of the British authorities to take place in the stormy years ushered in by the French Revolution of 1789.

The rising was financed and led by Robert Emmet. It supported the goals of the United Irishmen, whose own efforts had been crushed in 1798.

But it was different in two important ways which were to anticipate future, successful, strategies of national revolution—it did not rely on the possibility of a French invasion and it looked to the poor, the working class and the peasantry, to carry through the insurrection.

The United Irishmen had brought Ireland very close to successful revolution. Victory in 1798 would have meant that the country's development would have been very different to the experience under the Empire.

With a population of 8 million and rapidly expanding economy there is no reason why Ireland could not have become a powerful modern nation, a prospect that appealed to merchants

by **CONOR KOSTICK**

and business owners north and south.

Their movement, inspired by the model of the American Revolution of 1776 and the republican ideas of the French Revolution, consciously strove to set aside sectarianism in a bid to create a united independent country.

Robert Emmet believed that the United Irishmen failed because they waited for French aid and allowed the initiative to pass to the British authorities.

The postponement of action meant that by the time they called out their followers, the movement had been considerably disorganised by repression.

As Emmet wrote in the *Manifesto of the Provisional Government* which was issued in his rising, 'that confidence which was once lost by trusting to external support, and suffering our own means to be gradually undermined, has again been restored.'

Emmet looked to the peasantry and the urban poor of Dublin to be the insurrectionary force he needed.

The *Manifesto* contains 30 decrees, mostly concerned with the structure of government and administration of Ireland. But before them all comes decree number one:

1. *From the date, and promulgation hereof, tithes are forever abolished, and church lands are the property of the nation.*

The demand to end the tithes was immensely popular and had been central to peasant agitation, especially in Munster, for the previous two

generations. Whilst the social conditions for socialist ideas had not yet matured, Emmet showed no scruple in openly advocating the taking church property into control of the nation.

In practical terms, it was the working class that Emmet counted on to do the fighting. The working class in 1803 was a far cry from the huge force it was to become. A typical workplace in Dublin or Belfast would have one master craftsman and three or four journeymen.

Production often still took place in the home but change was underway. Mills with spinning jennies were opening up, particularly in Belfast where by 1800 an estimated 13,500 people were employed in the cotton trade.

The working class in England and Ireland had begun to organise independently for themselves—in Dublin from 1762 when corresponding societies had grown up to press for better wages and conditions.

This independent working class movement had surfaced in 1792 in the form of a very successful series of wage strikes.

Some of the well-to-do rebel leaders opposed these strikes because they saw such a movement undermining the prospect of competitive Irish industry.

By contrast, Robert Emmet relied on the working class completely. His base was the Coombe district of Dublin, the oldest working class area, inhabited by weavers, tanners and shoemakers.

He was connected with Edward Despard of the revolutionary London Corresponding Society, whose own insurrectionary plans ended with his arrest and execution in November 1802.

In 1802 Emmet was given a legacy of £3,000 following the death of his father.

He immediately put every penny at the disposal of revolution, purchasing the materials to make pikes, and premises to store them in.

However a series of accidents took place that was ultimately to destroy Robert Emmet's plans. On 16 July an accidental explosion led to the authorities investigating a building in

the Patrick St depot.

They failed to find the hidden weapons, but convinced that the incident would lead to further investigation and a clampdown, Emmet accelerated the timetable for an uprising and called his supporters out for the 23 July.

That Friday, a series of mishaps overtook the insurrection—but they all had an underlying cause. Fearful of the informers who had so deeply penetrated and destroyed the United Irishmen, Emmet had kept his plans confined to tiny numbers of people. He was successful in surprising the

*'From the date, and promulgation hereof, tithes are forever abolished, and church lands are the property of the nation.'*

authorities, but at the cost of the links of his movement being very thin. One by one they broke.

Mick Byrne, a leader from 1798, was still at large in Wicklow and capable of mobilising some 300 rebels, but he was not convinced of the credibility of the enterprise.

While being ready to move on the basis of seeing a green flag over Dublin castle or a similar sign of a serious rising underway, he kept his forces out of the city.

Similarly, a delegation of Kildare revolutionaries, who came in advance of the main mobilisation were not convinced that real forces would materialise and they left Dublin, turning back other rebels as they met them.

One reason for the alienation of such crucially important bodies of experienced rebels was that they were unimpressed by the military preparations.

A plan to enter the Dublin Castle by subterfuge using six hired carriages, splendidly dressed but packed with hidden rebels went astray when the

curious sight of the carriages caused a soldier to investigate. As soon as a shot was fired, the drivers, who were not part of the movement, dispersed.

Robert Emmet was left with his core base of support in the Coombe. A few hundred people eventually roamed the streets of the area armed with pikes but it was not the well-focused movement that he had anticipated. By the following day he realised his rising had failed and he left the city for the relative safety of the Wicklow mountains.

Emmet was eventually betrayed by an informer while staying in Harold's Cross. He resolved to use the subsequent show trial to his own ends and leave a statement that would aid the cause of national revolutionaries for the future.

He devastatingly refuted the core of the argument that he was a traitor in the service of France, pointing out that while willing to gain arms from France, that country had succumbed to slavery under Bonaparte and indeed was imposing slavery on other countries, despite claims of bringing liberty.

His closing words are famous: *'when my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written.'*

The day after this speech, Emmet was taken to the scaffold, where he showed total composure. Hooded and given a handkerchief to drop to indicate his readiness to die, he refused to let it fall. Exasperated the executioner kicked the plank away.

It took thirty minutes for the weight of his slight build to lead to his suffocation, after which the executioner struck of his head with a butcher's axe to show it to the crowd, while at the same time shouting 'Robert Emmet, traitor!'

If the British authorities hoped in this way to discredit Robert Emmet, they failed miserably, for he instantly entered the canon of national heroes.

In the centenary events remembering his life, one element of his philosophy should stand out: that the working class provides the only solid base for revolutionary movements.

comment

# LAP DANCING: FIANNA FAIL MAYOR GETS IT WRONG!

by

IN A recent interview in the *Irish Times*, Fianna Fail's Royston Brady, the newly elected Lord Mayor of Dublin, admitted that he frequented lap-dancing clubs when he in lived in America.

According to Brady, "If [a club] is a front for crime then deal with it. If it is legitimate, then they are doing nobody any harm, let them off...there are bigger issues to worry about".

Lap dancing clubs have become not just very mainstream, but also hip and trendy. Supporters and promoters of the clubs paint a picture of a contented, sexually-liberated and powerful workforce availing of lucrative opportunities.

Yet the reality of what goes on in the lapdancing industry is a million miles away from this. Behind the smiling faces of the women performing every night, are stories of human misery. Despite its clean image, lap-dancing is very much part of the global sex trade.

Most of the women now performing in the clubs are from outside Ireland. When gardai raided ten clubs across the country last month, ninety-six women were detained, the majority of whom were from Eastern Europe.

It is estimated that 300,000 women are trafficked from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union for sexual exploitation every year.

The women are brought to the West under false pretences. In many cases, desperate to escape poverty in their home country, they answer ads for work as au pairs or domestics in Western Europe only to find themselves herded off to lapdancing clubs and brothels.

## Motivation

Despite all the glowing recommendations for life as a lap dancer very few women choose it as a career. The profile of Irish women who enter the sex industry is always similar.

Clearing debts, rearing children, feeding a habit are the usual motivation with few real alternative choices and opportunities available. Lap dancing is a last resort not the first port of call.

The idea that removing her clothes or having sex for money is a mark of a women's liberation and empowerment is ludicrous yet this is an argument that is often made in defence of lapdancing. It implies that women control the situation.

Yet this is blatantly untrue. The reality is that women's bodies are turned into just another commodity to be bought and sold. In that process a woman's sexuality is completely divorced from her humanity.

So would a ban on lap-dancing clubs end all this? No. Lap-dancing merely reflects wider issues that need to be tackled in society.

Without dealing with them, the exploitation and oppression of women will continue, with or without the cover of legality.

First there's the whole issue of immigration policy. The more desperate women are to escape poverty, the more vulnerable they are to trafficking.

Allowing all the world's population freedom of movement and the right to work in any country would completely undermine this desperate trade in human beings.

Secondly, the reality of women's oppression in society cannot be ignored. The struggles of the 1960s have meant that for many western women in particular things have improved quite substantially. But the struggle is not over.

Women earn less than men, endure inferior promotional opportunities, over-representation in poverty statistics, under-representation in public life and are still regarded as the primary carers in society.

Women's oppression is a reality, yet some of those who led the feminist movement in the past have tried to gloss over this fact.

As a result we have a false, and dangerous, argument that the blatantly sexist images that we see all around us in advertising and popular culture are not in fact a mark of oppression but of liberation. War is peace, freedom is slavery, oppression is liberation.....

This leads to a position where fighting women's oppression is outdated, unnecessary and sexism goes unchallenged.

But the struggle against sexism, and the oppression it leads to, never went away. If we bring the struggle against women's oppression back into focus, women will have the chance to make real choices about what they do with their lives and their bodies. Even women who support Fianna Fail do not want careers in lap-dancing.

movie

# Goodbye, DDR!

by THERESA  
URBAINCZYK

'Goodbye Lenin' opened early this year in Berlin and is still showing in cinemas there at the moment.

This comedy has also been immensely popular throughout Germany having been seen so far by an estimated 7 million people so far. It opened in Dublin at the end of July at the IFC.

It's not hard to see why the plot attracted the producer's eye. It is about Alexander and his family living in East Berlin. His mother is a committed citizen of the DDR, even more committed after her husband left her to go and live in the West.

One day, after catching sight of her son on a demonstration, she has a heart attack and falls into a coma. When she wakes up, the doctor warns Alex and his sister that any shock could kill her.

The trouble for them is this is 1989 and the Wall has come down in the meantime and their whole world has changed. They decide to try to pretend that everything is as it was.

This leads them to bizarre situations as the pretence becomes increasingly difficult, especially when an enormous advert for Coca Cola



■ 1989: The Berlin Wall is torn down

appears on the building opposite their mother's bedroom window.

The film could be seen as a microcosm of the new situation in Germany. It is about the East, written and

directed by 'west Germans'.

It makes the audience laugh at the difficulties faced and overcome by Alex and his friends, while informing us of what life

was like in the East before and after 1989.

If you have a weak heart and support the former Communist regime, don't risk it, but if you are remotely interested in

Berlin, recent world history, or politics it is unmissable.

Just for the record: 'Goodbye DDR' perhaps, but certainly not Goodbye Lenin.

music

# Drumming up a global storm

by YURI  
PRASAD

EVERY SO often you only have to hear a track from an album and you know you're going to love the rest.

The Hour of Two Lights is one of them. Many people have tried to combine

musical styles from Europe and the Middle East. Sometimes this has involved little more than attaching beats and baselines to less familiar sounds.

This attempt feels much more genuine. The union creates something exciting and new.

The real genius in this

project must lie with those who thought that putting together a band that includes a 12 year old Lebanese singer, Hebrew vocalists, a troupe of Polish Gypsies and an Algerian rapper from Paris would be a good idea.

Ideas began to form when Terry Hall—who fronted the Specials back

in the 1970s—met Mush-taq, once of Fundamental, the British-Asian musical pioneers.

Both were frustrated by the way non-European music is pigeon-holed. They wanted to create something with a truly global sound.

## Reputation

Hall has a reputation for being deeply cynical about politics. Nevertheless he says the war on Iraq made the album more political. You can hear that in songs like "A Gathering Storm".

The album is not just a reaction to war. The lyrics of "Stand Together" attack hate-filled attitudes towards asylum seekers. The haunting "Silent



■ Terry Hall

Wail" is, to my mind, a form of musical solidarity made by combining with artists who are themselves facing persecution. The end result is a nomadic album of anger, fear and tremendous beauty.

■ *The Hour of Two Lights:* Terry Hall and Mushtaq

book

# Iran through the eyes of a comic book child

by SHABNAM  
YAZDI

MARJANE SATRAPI is the first Iranian to write an autobiography in comic book format. Iran has had a tradition of illustrating political satire with cartoons since the constitutional revolution of 1906.

In recent years the reformist movement has led to an explosion in the number of newspapers published and more satirical cartoons.

Satrapi's work emerges from that tradition. But the story within Satrapi's illustrations has



■ Marjane Satrapi

prevented her getting her book *Persepolis* published in Iran. Told from the perspective of a child of Marxist parents, the story is of a revolution gone wrong and the

repression that followed.

Recounting her experiences in comic format and through the eyes of a child enables Satrapi to infuse what is a painful story with irony and humour.

Satrapi's experiences, whilst familiar to all those who lived in post-revolutionary Iran, are new to the Western world since this is the first time that such a story has been published anywhere.

It is essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand what lies behind current Iranian politics.

■ *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi Cape £12.99

journal

# Imperialism analysed

CHRIS HARMAN has a major article in the new issue of the quarterly journal *International Socialism* which analyses how imperialism has changed over the period since Lenin wrote his famous pamphlet "Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism."

This is an important article that every anti war activist would profit from reading.

Among many other articles in the journal is one that uncovers the history of the revolutionary mass movements that shook Iraq in the 1940s and 1950s, and an assessment of the work of historian Christopher Hill by Brian Manning

■ *International Socialism* 99, €5 plus postage from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8



# Letters

Send letters to Socialist Worker,  
PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Email [swp@clubi.ie](mailto:swp@clubi.ie)

## Defend free speech in Galway

**GLOBALISE Resistance is calling for a campaign to defend rights to free speech and assembly in Galway. Meeting to be held at Java's Coffee house, Galway Thursday 7th of August at 8pm.**

Galway City Council are to vote on a proposal to ban leaflet distribution from the streets and to only allow public gatherings under permit, amounting to a direct attack on democratic rights.

Many groups use street leafleting as a vital organ to inform and network with the general public.

For many it is not an option to pay for media advertising and articles submitted are subject to editorial boards deciding what is "suitable" reading material.

The bye-law proposal only allows street distribution during the period of political elections—is democracy now to be confined purely to ballot-box timing, say once every four years?

Regarding public assembly, does the City Council propose to use a discretionary public gathering permit scheme, with threats of arrest if those refused permit engage in their rights of free speech and assembly?

Such a ruling is open to obstruction and denial of fundamental rights as the city council could use unfettered discretion to

grant assembly rights to favoured permittees and deny them to those they deem are "controversial".

A similar attempt to introduce a byelaw in Dublin to ban public assemblies was defeated

when hundreds of people protested outside a city council meeting.

There has recently been an enormous victory in Philadelphia, USA through street protest and threat of a lawsuit to

remove such a byelaw in their city.

The people of Galway can also stop these attacks on our rights by organising together.

Groups and individuals, trade unions and

political parties are called upon to mount a broad-based protest to let Galway council know that we will not accept these crackdowns on our rights.

✉ **DETTA McLOUGHLIN, Galway**

## Berlin workers were right to rebel

HERMAN Glasser-Baur claimed that we exaggerated the support for the East German uprising of 1953 (Letters SW 204).

He implies that the whole thing was got up by Western agents operating from the American sector of Berlin.

Heinz Brandt, Berlin Secretary of the ruling Communist Party (SED) thought otherwise. He wrote:

"The mass movement ... was absolutely spontaneous, without central leadership or organisation."

Brandt, who remembered, was a top official of the regime, also notes ruefully, "The building workers had thrown a spark into the mass, the spark burst into flames. It was like Lenin's dream come true."

The figure of 300,000 strikers which Herman ridicules is quoted from an admission of the East German President of the time, Grotewohl.

The areas where the general strike were



■ East Berlin, 1953

strongest were the industrial towns and cities that had already been "red" in the days of the Weimar Republic.

These were not Nazis fighting a "socialist" government, as the regime

claimed, but workers fighting an oppressive Stalinist state.

Like all the Stalinist states, East Germany was not a "workers' state". It was not created by workers' revolution but

instead it was a tyranny imposed by the bayonets of Stalin's armies.

This is why the regime crushed the uprising with tanks.

✉ **KEVIN WINGFIELD, Ballymun**



Capitalism is wrecking the lives of millions and endangering the planet. A new society can only be constructed when the workers take control of the wealth and plan its production and distribution for human need and not profit.

### REVOLUTION

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed. The courts, the army and police exist to defend the interests of the wealthy. To destroy capitalism, we need to remove the present state structures and create a workers' state based much greater political and economic democracy.

### AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR

War is a constant feature of capitalism today as the imperialist powers try to dominate the earth. Bush's "War on Terrorism" is a crude device to attack any country which threatens US military, strategic or economic

dominance.

### END RACISM AND OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression and racism. This divides and weakens the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women. We oppose immigration controls which are always racist.

### FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

We stand for workers unity against the Assembly politicians and Blair government. Like great socialist James Connolly, we believe that partition has brought about a 'carnival of reaction' We want to see an Irish workers republic where all workers gain. Our flag is neither green nor orange but red!

### FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. We call for co-operation between left-wing parties and the formation of a strong socialist bloc. We stand for fighting trade unions and for independent rank and file action.

## Marxist Forums

Big ideas discussed in informal settings



### Ballyfermot:

Bush and Africa: Can Free Market End African Nightmare? Thurs Aug 7, 8pm Ruby Finnigans Pub

### Ballymun:

Che Guevara and the politics of revolution 7.30pm Thursday August 7, Axis Centre Ballymun

### South Belfast:

Latin America in revolt, Wednesday August 13, One World Centre (4 Lower Crescent near The Fly) ph Ryan 077897 56994

### West Belfast:

The fight against racism today, Thursday 14th August—7.30pm, Conway Mill (Conway st, Lower Falls)—phone Davey: 0797 463 2485

### Ormeau Road:

The fight against Racism today 7.30pm Thursday 14th August: Whites Tavern—(off High st)—ph Mark—02890 593225

### Belfast Central:

Marxist Forum Liberia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe How the west destroyed Africa Wednesday 27th August 7.30pm Cafe Arcadia (off Donegal st)

### Blanchardstown:

Bush and Africa: Can Free Market End African Nightmare? Wed Aug 13, 8.30pm Laurel Lodge Community Centre

### Bray:

The World Economic Forum and corporate globalisation Thurs 7 Aug, 8pm in Lenihans Pub, Main St, Bray

### Cabra-Stoneybatter:

The politics of James Connolly Tues Aug 12, 8pm Smyth's Pub, Fairview

### Clondalkin:

Bush and Africa: Can Free Market End African Nightmare? Wed Aug 6, 8pm Oak Field Lodge Hotel

### Cork:

Cork: Africa and Imperialism Speaker: Luke Choto, Saturday August 9, Spailpin Fanach 3pm

### Dublin North City:

Leninism for the 21 Century Wed Aug 20, 8pm The Snug, Dorset Street

### Dun Laoghaire:

Coca-Cola and Colombia Tue Aug 19, 8pm Farrells Pub, Marine Road, Dun Laoghaire

### Fairview:

The Politics of James Connolly Tues Aug 12, 8pm Smyth's Pub, Fairview

### Lucan:

Bush and Africa: Can Free Market End African Nightmare? Wed Aug 6, 8pm Fox Hunter Pub

### Rialto:

Bush and Africa: Can Free Market End African Nightmare? Wed Aug 13, 8.30pm St Andrews Community Centre

### Tallaght:

Bush and Africa: Can Free Market End African Nightmare? Wed Aug 6, 8pm Tallaght Welfare Society

### Tralee:

Women and Class, speaker Crea Ryder, Wed Aug 20, 8pm Cumman losaf

■ For details of other Marxist Forums contact (01) 872 2682

## Fight the credit card rip-off

Hi, I am just writing to say that I would like to hear from people who are fed up being ripped off with high interest rates on credit card as I would like to start a campaign.

I got a bill recently for balance of 70 euro. I could not pay on time because of other bills. The next bill was 157 euro (late charges, protection and interest). I rang and said that I paid in 170 and they said I now owe over 400 euro due to late charges.

I asked them how do they expect me to pay this if they keep lashing on charges as the 170 euro I paid was from a loan. I had agreed a weekly payment before and they said they would not add charges but they still added charges. I rang them and they said they would look into it.

Anyway, its just seems to get worse, and ok, so everyone keeps saying, you should not have got a credit card. Ok I know.

But forget about that, I want to start a campaign to let people really know about how easy it is to get into debt and end up been ripped off in charges. If I stop a few people getting credit cards, well that's my goal, and the more people complain the better.

I would also like people to know that there are groups that can help people get out of this hole !

If anyone is interested in joining Pat Judges Campaign Against Rip Off Credit Charges then call and leave a message on (01) 8341420 Dublin.

✉ **PAT JUDGE, Finglas**

## END THE OCCUPATIONS OF IRAQ & PALESTINE

US Military Out of Shannon

Global Day of Action  
NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION  
Saturday September 27th  
2pm Parnell Square Dublin  
Called by the Irish Anti War Movement

## SWP ACTIVISTS ARE ORGANISED IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

## I want to join the Socialist Workers Party

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

Email.....

Union/College.....

## Join the Socialists!

To join the Socialist Workers Party or for more information:

Fill in the form and Send to:  
ROI: SWP PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Phone (01) 872 2682

NI: SWP PO Box 143, Mallusk Road, Mallusk, Phone 0774 2531617

Email [swp@clubi.ie](mailto:swp@clubi.ie) Web: [www.swp.ie](http://www.swp.ie)



Bank of Ireland



# IT workers strike to fight out source plan

**TWO HUNDRED and fifty union members in the IT section of the Bank of Ireland in Cabinteely, Co Dublin, staged a 24 hour strike against plans by the bank to outsource their jobs to US multinational Hewlett Packard.**

Hundreds of workers picketed the Bank of Ireland centre in determined mood as passing cars honked their horns in support of the strikers.

The workers are employed by ITIS a subsidiary of Bank of Ireland which provides technical support to the IT section of the Bank. The company are now trying to off-load to the giant US multinational in what is clearly a cost cutting exercise.

Workers are opposed to the move because they fear that their jobs and conditions will be at risk with HP which is a non-union firm.

Under the proposed move the workers will only be guaranteed job security for two years with HP. In the third year they will be entitled to a redundancy package if their jobs are cut but from the fourth year on

they will have absolutely no guarantees. Their jobs and conditions will be at the mercy of Hewlett Packard.

The workers were at the LRC last week where Bank of Ireland made offers of financial compensation if the employees accepted the plan to be taken over by Hewlett Packard.

However the workers made clear that it is not money they are looking for but job security and guaranteed conditions.

Paudie, a union rep with the IBOA told *Socialist Worker*:

"The Bank tries to tell us



that no-one is entitled to job security and offered us lump sum payments.

"We told them that is not money that we are after. We want job security.

"They think they can just buy us off but they are wrong.

"The company have given us no good reason for

this plan to outsource us.

"They claim that we are not involved in core activity within the Bank. This is nonsense.

"They just don't want to admit that this is about cost cutting.

"And this after the bank has just recently announced another year of record prof-

its."

The company has so far indicated that they intend to press ahead with the plans to outsource the jobs of those working for ITIS whether or not the workers come to an agreement.

This is due to happen in about a month and half's time.

However the workers are determined to resist the company's plans and fight for job security and proper conditions.

## Message

"We are sending a clear message to the company today.

"The union in this centre was devastated after the strike in 1992 when the company convinced many workers not to support the strike.

"But all the promises made to workers by the company turned out to be lies just as the union predicted.

"Now workers are flooding back into the union. Now people are being really galvanised. It's great to see it."

Paudie also sees the strike as fight against corporate globalisation.

"We have always felt part of the Bank of Ireland.

## Hewlett Packard boss has no time for workers' rights

Kasper Rorsted, the head of Hewlett Packards European Operations, gave a clear indication of what may lie in store for HP workers.

He pointedly criticised proposed new EU employment legislation that seeks to increase workers rights.

The legislation would grant temporary workers employed by agencies the same rights and pay as permanent workers.

Rorsted however believes that management needs "flexibility" in managing its workforce. In other words pay, conditions and worker rights must be kept to a minimum. This is the real agenda behind outsourcing.



■ Kasper Rorsted

## SIPTU: Conference to oppose privatisation

**IRELAND'S largest union, SIPTU, meets in Galway at the end of August amidst considerable unease over the threats of privatisation.**

The union leaders have long argued that social partnership agreements gave them a say in running the economy.

It was supposed to ward off the worst excesses of Thatcherism.

However, as the recession takes hold, the government is brushing aside union concerns.

Sometimes they do this while making vague gestures.

So Ahern told the ICTU conference that he wanted to work with the unions—but within the next fortnight, Brennan announced the break-up of Aer Rianta.

Resolutions from branches such as the Local Authorities branch and the Dublin Bus branch call for outright opposition to privatisation and to the introduction of Public Private Partnerships—a cover name for a new form of privatisation.

The other big issue at the conference is likely to be the political direction of the union.

A resolution from the Education branch calls for the opening of the political fund to other socialist parties besides Labour.

The SIPTU leadership has always followed the Labour party line, advocating a Yes vote on the Nice Treaty, for example, when many members were opposed to it.

However, there is unease about a recent statement from Pat Rabbitte that he would not necessarily advocate retaining state ownership.

Union activists will also be considering what to do about the cuts in the public service.

A crucial resolution from the State Agencies Branch recommends that the union adopt a 'no-cover' policy so that union members do not take on extra work to compensate for the cuts.

## Dairygold slashes jobs

**NEW Dairygold Chief Executive Jerry Henchy has decided that at least 1,500 jobs will be slashed over the next three years.**

The plans involve up to 1,000 redundancies with hundreds of other jobs to be lost through outsourcing and the sale of sections such as the pig and beef divisions.

Truck drivers will be forced to 'buy out' their own trucks and deliver milk as a private business.

Dairygold's plans are a savage blow to whole communities in the towns and villages in North Cork.

At a recent AGM, local farmers, who are the main shareholders in the company, forced nine of the ten board members to resign. They passed a motion of no confidence in the board, claiming that they had benefited above everyone else.

*Socialist Worker* spoke to Sean Donegan, a SIPTU shop steward in Dairygold until he recently retired. Sean, who has worked col-

lecting milk from farmers, spoke about the long hours drivers have to work for the company and said they are in breach of all Health and Safety standards.

New proposals, he says, will make working conditions even more difficult. Drivers will be forced to form small companies to cover for each other at all times and take responsibility for maintenance of their own trucks. He says that there will be resistance among the current workers.

Increasing competition from imported milk is also undercutting the price per gallon paid to local farmers. This is in line with plans by the World Trade Organisation.

Farmers, however, are starting to resist the ruthless agribusiness by demanding more control over their co-operatives.

In Glanbia 30 percent of its milk suppliers are demanding that the company be returned to co-operative ownership.

## BIN TAX:

# Collections threat for late summer

AT THE end of the summer, a confrontation is expected between local councils and the huge numbers refusing to pay bin taxes.

Legislation brought in in June allows councils to stop collecting the refuse from those who refuse to pay this double taxation.

Although this law is now on the statute books, local councils have not yet implemented it.

Brid Smith of the Dublin Campaign Against the Bin Tax told *Socialist Worker*, 'The Dublin City Council will face massive confrontations in the estates if they implement this measure.

'The campaign across Dublin is using the summer months to build up its strength, signing up new members and keeping up the argument for mass non-payment.'

In Ballyfermot, for

example, activists meet every week and go door-to-door signing local people up and distributing quantities of leaflets and petitions to take round their friends and workmates.

It is likely that local councils in September will

stop collecting rubbish from non-payers.

At that point residents will organise mass blockades and other actions to prevent the discriminatory policy.

In other council areas moves are being made to

re-organise refuse collection in readiness for non-collection.

Brid Smith said, 'In the meantime the word is Don't pay this unjust double tax, organise your area and keep up the mass campaign of non-payment.'

## Rough stuff from Council in Ballymun

Dublin City Council's subsidiary Ballymun Regeneration Ltd (BRL) is prepared to use strong-arm tactics to force through its agenda.

The rebuilding of Ballymun has sparked controversy because of poorly built housing, long delays and trampling over the wishes of residents.

Earlier this year the democratically elected Poppintree Forum was disbanded and ejected from its offices when it refused to ratify BRL's 'master plan'

for the area.

But things got worse at the end of last month. Ballymun Council is a supposedly independent body set up by BRL to liaise with residents. It held a public meeting for residents of the Courts in the Sports Complex. But members of the Poppintree Forum were told they would not be allowed in.

One forum member was physically prevented from entering the Sports Complex where the meeting was held and was assaulted.

One Forum member told *Socialist Worker*, 'In the Courts, BRL plan to knock down 52 houses and build another 250 in the same space. A lot of people are fed up with being pushed around by the BRL. It's time people who are unhappy with the situation right across Ballymun got together to oppose BRL's divide and conquer tactics.'

Now a number of residents' groups are planning to link up to take the fight further.



# Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY €1.00 / £0.70p

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## STOP THE PRIVATISATION OF DUBLIN BUS

Join the  
protests:  
tuesday aug 19th

# SUPPORT THE CIE WORKERS

**‘FAIR PLAY to the CIE workers!’ This is how Rose from Santry in Dublin reacted to the No Fares Day in July.**

‘I don’t own a car and I don’t drive—I need the buses and I know if they bring in the private system like they have in England, we can say goodbye to the service.’

Unions in CIE, fighting Seamus Brennan’s privatisation plan, operated the entire bus and rail network without collecting fares. Workers gave passengers leaflets prepared by the unions giving the case against the sell-off.

On No Fares day supporters collected signatures for petitions on buses and reported the response was hugely in favour of the workers’ action.

CIE workers and their unions are now preparing for a day of protests on August 19. Buses and trains will run until 11am when workers will stop and take part in protests around the country.

In Dublin CIE workers will march from the city centre to the Dail. Similar protests are planned for Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford.

Pat, a bus driver from Finglas, told *Socialist Worker*, ‘There needs to be a massive turn out on that day. We hope there will be contingents from community and residents groups, other trade unionists and the travelling public as well as bus and rail workers. We need to stop Brennan in his tracks.’

In the run up to August 19 support is growing from other trade unionists,

community groups and local residents.

Anti Privatisation Forum meetings have been held to build up public support for the fight. In July 150 people attended a meeting in Dublin’s Liberty Hall. They heard representatives from the CIE unions expose the lies of Brennan.

### Axed

Based on the experience of Britain, union representatives pointed out that privatised buses will mean not competition but private monopolies. Workers conditions of service will suffer and the service will deteriorate—off peak and other non-profitable services would be axed and free travel for pensioners would be put at risk.

A CWU member work-

ing at Eircom spoke from the floor. The privatisation of Telecom Eireann had been a con—it was a rip off for the taxpayers and the workers, he said.

Other Anti Privatisation Forum Public Meetings were also held in Ballyfermot and Finglas.

Jimmy Gilchrist of Belclare Park Tenants Associate spoke at the Finglas meeting. He told *Socialist Worker*, ‘I support the CIE workers because where I live in Poppintree, lots of people depend on the buses. Privatisation will mean our service suffers.’

‘Even now the service is not 100 percent but it will be very much worse under privatisation. I urge everyone to get behind the CIE workers and support their protest action on August 19.’



## Get to the protests on August 19

OWEN McCormack of the Busworkers Action Group told *Socialist Worker*, ‘This is a serious fight. CIE managers have threatened to defer a 3 percent wage rise due in October as punishment for the No Fares Day. The unions have said they will

not tolerate this. ‘We have heard that Ahern has offered to meet the unions in early August in the hope of having the action called off. ‘We have to insist that so long as the threat of privatisation hangs over us, the campaign of action must go ahead.’